

05 PARTING WAYS

KEY TEXT: ACTS 15:36–16:5

CENTRAL truth

Barnabas and Paul were not just friends—they were united as siblings in Christ and as co-workers on a missionary journey. So it's particularly sad to see to see them decide to part ways. As the two men assemble their own teams, we will see God's kindness and power in allowing them to cover even more ground as a result. **Difficult relationships don't have to derail us as we partner with God in His mission to the world.**

key question

How can we see the Lord at work in these passages despite Barnabas and Paul's separation?

As Barnabas and Paul parted ways, two teams formed—and God used the two teams to cover more ground as they spread the good news and encouraged followers of Jesus. God is the true hero of Acts who accomplishes His mission despite the conflict between the missionaries.

keep in mind

- Barnabas and Paul's disagreement was so intense that they decided to part ways. At times, this is the appropriate response to conflict. However, encourage students to seek reconciliation with others as much as possible and to fight against bitterness regardless of the outcome.
- This week, we'll be introduced to a young believer named Timothy whose mother was a Jewish believer. However, based on the brief description of Timothy's father, he was likely an unbeliever. Perhaps some of the students in your group come from homes where one parent is a follower of Jesus while the other is not. Prayerfully remain aware of this as you teach this session.

application

How can we remind one another of God's power when we have trouble in our relationships?

the win

FOR THE STUDENT: Help students understand that difficult relationships don't need to have the final word in their lives. Though these situations are difficult, they can still honor the Lord.

FOR THE LEADER: Encourage students to bring the difficult relationships on their mind to the Lord in prayer. Remind them of God's care and power as they learn to trust Him. If appropriate, share your own experiences of how God worked in the midst of your own challenging relationships.